

Shin Beth opposes return of refugees

TEL AVIV (AFP) — The Israeli internal security service Shin Beth is opposed to any return of Palestinians to the villages of Iktit and Biram in the far north of Israel, which they left in the 1948 Arab-Israeli war. A newspaper reported here Sunday. The independent daily Haaretz said Shin Beth feared the return of the refugees to their homes would set a "dangerous precedent" which could encourage other Palestinians who fled Israel in 1948 to do the same. A ministerial committee chaired by Justice Minister David Levy was due to hear the views of Shin Beth officers on the matter before submitting its recommendations to the government, the newspaper reported. It said residents of 150 Arab villages abandoned in 1948 had demanded the right to return, in a document handed over to the committee. Israeli historians with Lebanon, were told by the authorities that they could return home after the war. However, the Israeli army later declared the two villages to be closed military zones, and Israeli governments refused to let the villagers return. Arab and Israeli negotiators have been discussing the refugee question at the multilateral peace talks.

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Committee on women meets

AMMAN (Petra) — Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Sunday chaired the first meeting of the National Committee on Women's Affairs and called for a mechanism for the work of the committee. Princess Basma said it was important for her to set up such a committee to benefit from the experiences of its members and ensure their contribution to the implementation of the national strategy for women. The committee will also make the necessary preparations for the fourth international conference on women, due to be held in Peking in 1995.

Saleh warns against coups

SANA (R) — Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh on Sunday warned against what he called ideological terrorism in Yemen. Mr. Saleh told a meeting of his General People's Congress (GPC) party: "We have to get rid of residues of the mentality of the past and of the totalitarian regime. We should never allow the mentality of plotting, of bloody coups and of ideological and political terrorism to come back anew or dominate our political life." Political sources said Mr. Saleh's comments appeared directed at the Yemen Socialist Party (YSP) and could hinder efforts to end rifts between the two which have paralysed Yemen.

Economic talks in Amman — Peres

DAVOS (AFP) — Participants in the Middle East peace process are to hold an economic conference in Amman aimed at encouraging investment in the region from Europe, Japan and the United States, the Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres said Sunday. "We are planning an economic conference in Amman with business organisations from the United States, Europe and Japan," Mr. Peres said. "We will offer them the chance to participate in the construction of a new Middle East," he said. Jordanian Information Minister Jawad Anani said he hoped the conference would take place this year but he did not give a definite date. Dr. Anani told an audience of participants at the World Economic Forum that the conference would not be aimed at putting together a shopping list for the region but of trying to work together to rebuild the region's economy.

EU delegation visits Damascus

DAMASCUS (AFP) — A European Union (EU) delegation has begun a visit to Damascus to discuss implementation of a \$190 million financial aid package ratified by the European Parliament last month, EU sources said Sunday. The delegation led by Eberhard Riehn, European Commission director for the Mediterranean and Middle East, arrived Saturday and would spend four days in Syria before travelling on to Jordan. The lawmakers urged the government to deal firmly with such "crimes that aim at barming national security," and to guarantee the security of Jordanian diplomats.

Arafat, Peres move closer to agreement

DAVOS, Switzerland (Agencies) — Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Leader Yasser Arafat and Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres Sunday moved tantalisingly close to finalising an agreement on Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories.

On a day of see-saw hopes, Palestinian and Arab negotiators consistently talked up the prospect of an imminent accord, while the Israeli delegation played it down.

The most stubborn problems included the size of the area around the West Bank town of Jericho to come under Palestinian control, and security at border crossings in the Gaza Strip.

"We are on our way to bypass all the obstacles which had been raised in the last weeks... to have very soon, very soon the final agreement," Mr. Arafat told a conference organised by the World Economic Forum, a private Swiss-based organisation.

Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa, who helped mediate the talks, said all that remained to clear up was "finishing some points."

"This really is the final stage," he told journalists. He said he expected a final agreement to be signed in Cairo within 10 days.

Mr. Peres refused to commit himself to a time-frame for concluding the final accord.

But he told the conference that Israel was committed to making a success of the peace

process. Israel Radio said Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin was studying a compromise proposal worked out in Davos, Switzerland, state radio reported.

The proposal concerned the size of the autonomous Jericho area to be ceded to the Palestinians under the self-rule plan.

Another stumbling block was control of the border crossings between the new autonomous Palestinian regions in the Gaza Strip and Jordan, and in particular, Egypt.

Israel demands it maintain security on the borders, but the PLO has said the presence of Israeli soldiers would violate the guarantees of autonomy.

The Israeli national news agency Ilna said the weekly cabinet meeting Sunday remained firm on its position on the border checks.

However, Gad Ben-Ari, spokesman for Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, said the cabinet had made no decisions and had not been asked to make any decisions.

There are also detailed administrative arrangements to be sorted out in order to implement the accord signed Sept. 13 in Washington.

The two men were due to hold more late night talks to try to narrow the differences. Mr. Peres was scheduled to leave early Monday for Washington, while Mr. Arafat was expected in the Swiss capital Bern.

"Some things will be finished and some things will remain to be solved," said Israeli Environment Minister Yossi Sarid when asked if the talks would be wound up in Switzerland.

A key issue in the negotiations continued to be the size

(Continued on page 5)

House condemns diplomat's killing, urges government to deal firmly

By Ayman Al Safadi
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Lower House of Parliament Sunday condemned as a barbarous crime the assassination of Jordanian diplomat Nayeb Imran Maaytah in Beirut Saturday.

"While expressing disgust with the ugly and barbarous (assassination), the House reiterates the importance of dealing with our issues through dialogue and democratic means all across the Arab arena," deputies said in a statement.

The lawmakers urged the government to deal firmly with such "crimes that aim at barming national security," and to guarantee the security of Jordanian diplomats.

The House also called on the Lebanese government to

uncover the assassins and refer them to court.

Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali told the House the government bad asked the Lebanese authorities to involve Jordan in the investigations into the killing. He said evidence available so far was not sufficient to indicate who was or were behind the assassination. (see separate story.)

King Hussein said a specialised person should head the board of the carrier.

A number of deputies argued that the minister of transport should head the board so that deputies can control the airline's operations.

Deputy Toujan Faisal argued that the RJ chairman should not be a specialised person because his role would be marginal in running

(Continued on page 5)

Bilaterals positive, encouraging — Syria

DAMASCUS (Agencies) — The bilateral Arab-Israeli peace talks in Washington are proceeding in an "encouraging and positive atmosphere," the official Al Thawra daily said here Sunday.

In an editorial, the newspaper said U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher described the negotiations as "very promising" because "he noted how serious the Syrian position was."

The bilateral talks resumed Monday after a four-month break following the signing of the Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) autonomy accord in September, which Syria condemned, arguing that separate deals undermined the Arab negotiating position.

"The negotiations will make progress if Israel conforms to the requirements of peace, but the search for a settlement will go back to square one if the Jewish state continues to stand by its previous position," the newspaper said.

(Continued on page 5)

Settler, 2 soldiers wounded in Gaza

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — A Palestinian on Sunday shot and wounded a Jewish settler less than a day after two soldiers were injured in a grenade attack in the same area of the occupied Gaza Strip, Arab sources said.

The man shot the settler as he was travelling by car near his home in the Morag settlement, causing wounds to the arm that required treatment at the Beersheba hospital in southern Israel, they said.

The man launched a handgun.

The Islamic Resistance Movement Hamas later said it carried out the attack.

"We hit a Jewish settler, seriously wounding him," Hamas' armed wing Izzeddin Al Qassam said in a statement released in Gaza.

"This position could not

(Continued on page 3)

Late air force chief to be laid to rest today

AMMAN (J.T.) — The body of Jordan's air force chief, Major-General Awani Bilal, who died last week in Washington of a heart attack, was flown home Sunday.

His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Prime Minister and Defence Minister Abdul Salam Majali, other several royal family members, government leaders and senior Armed Forces officials were at hand to receive the body.

A U.S. Air Force plane brought the body to Marka airport. The funeral is scheduled for Monday.

Gen. Bilal, 55, was in Washington to attend a meeting of a joint Jordan-American Military Commission.

He served in the Royal Jordan Air Force command for 17 years. Known for his flying skills, he became chief of the command one year ago.

He is survived by his wife and three children.

The body of the late general, wrapped by the Jordanian flag, was taken to the King Hussein Medical Centre. Re-

latives said the body would be briefly moved to the late general's residence at Tabarbour Monday before it is carried in a funeral procession to the Royal Cemetery.

At the airport, the Regent and the relatives of the deceased major-general received the condolences of the mourners.

In Washington, Jordan's Ambassador to the United States Fayez Tarawneh led a

group of mourners at dawn Sunday to accompany the body to Andrew air force base where the body was placed on the plane headed for Amman.

Gen. Mirai voiced the Armed Forces' appreciation to the King and pledged allegiance and loyalty to the King.

Also Sunday, Prime Minister Majali received a cable of condolences from Egyptian Minister of Defence Field Marshal Mohammad Hussein Tantawi over the death of Gen. Bilal.

Maaytah assailant(s) 'seized documents'

AMMAN (Agencies) — The killer(s) of a senior Jordanian diplomat in Beirut seized documents from his briefcase before fleeing the scene, Jordanian Foreign Ministry officials said here Sunday, citing Lebanese police.

No group claimed responsibility for the murder Saturday of Naeb Imran Maaytah, first secretary at the Jordanian embassy in Lebanon, who was shot four times in the head, neck and chest as he sat in his Mercedes car, according to police and witnesses.

He was killed in the seafront Raouche neighbourhood, which is under Syrian and Lebanese army control.

The Jordanian officials, quoted by AFP, said Lebanese police, who launched a manhunt Sunday, did not give any details about the contents of the documents seized by the assailant(s).

In Beirut, Jordanian Ambassador Fakhri Abu Taleb said:

"The murder was planned and carried out by professionals and it could have taken place in any other country."

Mr. Maaytah, a 42-year-old father of three who was posted to Beirut a year ago, was the first Jordanian diplomat killed in the Lebanese capital. A Jordanian chargé d'affaires

was kidnapped in Beirut in February 1981 but set free a month later in Syria.

Twenty paramilitary police with M-16 machineguns were deployed outside the Jordanian embassy and the ambassador's residence Sunday.

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(Continued on page 5)

Maaytah given state funeral in hometown

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordanian diplomat Nayeb Imran Maaytah, who was assassinated in Beirut, was buried in his hometown in southern Jordan on Sunday. Mr. Maaytah, 42, a first secretary at the Jordanian embassy in the Lebanese capital, was shot dead early Saturday as he was driving out of his garage to work (see separate story).

His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, delegated His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah Ben Al Hussein to take part in the funeral of Mr. Maaytah.

Mr. Maaytah's coffin, draped in a Jordanian flag, was carried in an ambulance decked with flowers from King Hussein Medical Centre to his hometown of Batir in Karak Governorate.

Also taking part in the funeral procession were Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali, advisors of His Majesty King Hussein, the acting minister of state for foreign affairs, senior military and civil officials and several heads of diplomatic missions.

Thousands of people turned up to attend Mr.

Maaytah's funeral in Batir, chanting slogans demanding retribution for the murder. Witnesses reported.

"May grief and distress fall the treacherous and cowardly assassins," they shouted during the state funeral.

They were echoing comments by the King himself that "the rats and bats infest-

'Sacrifices strengthen Jordan'

HIS ROYAL Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Sunday met with members of training committees at the military training command and the armed forces' colleges and schools.

Prince Hassan said sacrifices offered by Jordan would only strengthen its resolve to carry out its national duty.

"The sacrifices will strengthen our reserve to continue carrying the banner of righteousness higher than anything," the Regent said.

"The sacrifices of these days, from the assassination of the first secretary at Jordan's embassy in Beirut (Nayeb Maaytah yesterday) to the commander of the Royal Air Force, Awani Bilal (who died of a heart attack last week), will always be a reminder for us that God's will is stronger than all of us."

"They can kill us as individuals, but they cannot kill our homeland."

His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah and Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali Sunday offer condolences to the Maaytah family at the funeral of Nayeb Maaytah in Batir near Karak (Petra photo)

ing the dark and those behind them in directing these acts be damned and crushed."

In a message he sent to Crown Prince Hassan, from Austria where he is paying a visit, King Hussein said: "Vengeance for our martyr is a task for all of us as one united family against the villains and murderers."

New Libyan cabinet signals long standoff with West

SIRTE, Libya (AFP) — Libya has named Abdul Majid Al Qua'd as head of a new 16-member cabinet, but kept the same foreign minister in a sign it prepared for a long standoff with the West over the Lockerbie bombing.

The General People's Congress (GPC), or parliament, appointed Mr. Qua'd an engineer and former agriculture minister, as prime minister in the first new government in four years.

Staying on in their key foreign policy posts were Omar Al Muntasser as foreign minister and Jomaa Al Mandi Al Fezzani as minister of Arab unity.

A Western diplomat said the appointments signalled that Libya would probably stick to its refusal to surrender two suspects accused of blowing up a Pan American airliner over Lockerbie, Scotland, in 1988, killing 270 people.

In foreign policy, "it looks like continuity," a Western diplomat in the capital Tripoli said.

Its refusal to hand the men over for trial in Scotland or the United States sparked U.N. sanctions which took effect in April 1992. These include a ban on international flights and trade in weapons, a freeze on assets abroad and a ban on some oil-related equipment.

Parliament named outgoing Prime Minister Abu Zeid Omar Darda as its new deputy speaker. Mr. Darda replaced Mohammad Hijazi who became minister of justice, which had been vacant since Ibrahim Al Bakkar died last year in a car accident.

The armed forces commander, Colonel Abu Bakr Yunes Jaber, a close aide of Libyan leader Colonel Muammar Qaddafi, stayed on as the defence minister — not listed as an official post.

About 1,000 delegates attended the GPC which began last Saturday in Sirte, 400 kilometres northeast of the capital Tripoli.

Government mismanagement and indifference to the needs of the people came under heavy attack during the week-long debates which were carried on Libyan television.

The GPC rejected the resignation of Agrarian Reform Minister Issa Abdul Kafi Al Sid.

Parliamentary Speaker Zanati Mohammad Zanati retained his post.

Libya's ambassador to France, Saad Mustapha, became the parliament's foreign affairs secretary and Mahmoud Al Hitki was named secretary of popular committees (ministries) affairs.

Iran struggles with reform

TEHRAN (AFP) — Fifteen years after Iran's Islamic revolution, businessmen drive brand-new Mercedes, advertising billboards abound, and newspapers publish stock quotations.

And workers demonstrate against rising prices as well as unemployment, corruption spreads, and hardliners denounce the abandonment of revolutionary ideals.

When the Islamic revolution triumphed on Feb. 1, 1979 in the name of the have-nots, it made austerity a virtue and nationalised entire sectors of the economy.

A decade and a half later, Iran has reversed course and headed towards a market economy, a process which has plunged the government into an unprecedented crisis and hit the poor severely.

The liberalisation drive was launched by President Ali Akbar Rafsanjani, just one year after the revolution's charismatic leader, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, died in 1989.

Hoping to revive an economy disrupted first by the

revolution and then by the 1980-1988 war with Iraq, Mr. Rafsanjani steadily removed subsidies, started monetary reform, and backed privatisation of industry and services.

He allowed foreign products back into Iran and urged wealthy Iranians who had fled abroad during the revolution to return home.

Liberalisation filled stores with goods, plunged the country into a spending spree after decade of society, and brought new life into the Tehran bazaar, the economy's traditional driving force.

It also led to new fortunes for those who invested in real estate.

Tehran's relationship with Washington is a symbol of its current pragmatism.

While the leadership and the press continue to label Washington as the "great Satan" and the revolution's foremost enemy, the United States in the past few years has become one of Iran's main trading partners.

But this "second revolution" is going through increasingly hard times as the government

fails to control it properly and some politicians and religious figures slow it down for fear of its social consequences.

The return to a market economy and a sharp depreciation of the rial have produced runaway inflation and impoverished much of the population who can no longer afford many items.

Corruption, which had disappeared in the first few years after the revolution, has returned at an alarming pace.

Uncontrolled imports combined with falling oil revenues have placed Iran on the brink of bankruptcy.

The GPC also called on the United Nations Security Council to intervene to bring to trial the U.S. officials responsible for the 1986 American raid against Tripoli and Benghazi.

Sunday's statement also said the GPC "rejected the Gaza-Jericho (limited autonomy) accord" signed by Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) on Sept. 13 in Washington and called on the Palestinian people to "hold on to their right to free their land and establish a democratic state in Palestine."



DEFIANT SETTLERS: Handcuffed Jewish settlers raise their arms as they enter a court in occupied Jerusalem Sunday. About 20 settlers were arrested late Saturday as they tried to set up an "illegal" settlement in the West Bank (AFP photo)

Libya urges Maghreb to stop sanctions

SIRTE, Libya (AFP) — Libya's parliament Sunday urged other members of the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) to stop implementing U.N. sanctions slapped on Libya, four days ahead of an AMU summit in Tunis.

"We ask the AMU countries to stop implementing the embargo," said a statement issued by the General People's Congress (GPC), or parliament, after a week-long session in Sirte, 400 kilometres northeast of the capital Tripoli.

Besides Libya, the AMU consists of Morocco, Algeria, Mauritania and Tunisia.

The GPC has decided "to

Palestinian elections test support for self-rule

GAZA (R) — Supporters and opponents of the Palestine Liberation Organisation's (PLO) peace deal with Israel have laid out plans to boost social and health services provided by the association.

But candidate Rafik Mekki admitted the election was as much about national politics as professional matters: "It is natural in the critical time we live in that politics play a role."

Palestinians also see institutional elections as a measure for voting trends across the occupied territories for a Palestinian self-rule authority, due later this year.

Since September's peace deal, Islamists have also displaced Fatah supporters from the Gaza Accountants Association and wonoverwhelmingly in union elections at the Islamic University.

An alliance of Muslim fundamentalists and hardline secular factions beat PLO supporters in student elections at Bir Zeit University in the West Bank, traditionally a bastion of Palestinian nationalism.

Fatah, who only a few years ago controlled nearly every Palestinian institution, in other elections have kept control of a United Nations training centre in Kalandia refugee camp, a technical college in Nablus and the West Bank Doctors' Union.

The engineer's association verifies professional documentation for its members and sets professional standards. It also has a social fund and health service.

Theft of food aid plunges Somalia force into controversy

MOGADISHU (AFP) — The theft of 327 tonnes of food from a World Food Programme (WFP) warehouse at Belet Huen in western Somalia has ignited a controversy over the attitude of U.N. troops accused of refusing to protect aid workers afraid for their safety.

The incident has also embarrassed aid organisations only a few days before a new conference on humanitarian aid for Somalia due to be held this week in Nairobi.

WFP workers have suspended operations at Belet Huen since the theft and the WFP head of logistics in Mogadishu, Uli Schmid, said they would not be resumed "until the stolen food is returned to us."

He said the WFP had suffered a similar theft at Berbera in the northern Somaliland region and had reacted

similarly. "We demanded the same thing and it worked," he said.

For the time being the local coordinator of WFP in Belet Huen has left to return to Mogadishu.

The British Save the Children Fund (SCF) has likewise halted all its operations in Belet Huen and its two staff have temporarily left for Nairobi.

A half dozen other people working for non-governmental organisations (NGOs), most of them local ones, have placed themselves under the protection of U.N. German soldiers.

A large man-hunt has been launched to find those responsible for stealing the WFP food valued at some \$85,000. But Mr. Schmid said it was widely rumoured that local Governor Hassan Qasal had master-minded the theft

which was carried out by a well-organised gang equipped with guns and trucks.

On Tuesday, the day before the food was stolen, Mr. Qasal told the WFP to hire private security guards in place of the Somali policemen protecting the warehouse.

The WFP refused and the following night the food was seized under the nose of the police who said they had been unable to do anything because the thieves were too numerous. Next morning, the food was being sold on local markets.

The incident heightened tension between rival local clans as rumours spread that the SCF base was next on the thieves' list.

Frightened SCF workers appealed to Italian soldiers based in Belet Huen for protection and help in leaving the town.

In this respect the situation in Belet Huen is unique in Somalia, a spokesman for the U.N. force in Somalia (UNOSOM) said Saturday.

Like the Americans, French or Belgians, the Germans and Italians have decided to withdraw from Somalia by March 31 and are gradually reducing the size of their contingents.

There are still about 1,300 German soldiers in Belet Huen whereas the number of Italian troops has been reduced from 500 last year to

150.

The Italians' mission has been similarly cut back and pending their replacement by 170 Malaysian soldiers their task effectively comes down to protecting the Germans.

"We knew this and is why we didn't ask them for anything," said Mr. Schmid.

However, Richard Burge, who heads the SCF programme in Mogadishu was more forthright: "I am very angry with the Italians... they have refused assistance to NGOs. Men on the ground refused to offer their support."

He added: "I find their attitude, their lack of humanitarian sense beyond belief... they should go home, they are only confusing the issue."

UNOSOM civilian and military spokesman said its services had received no re-

quest for assistance from the SCF.

Major David Stockwell admitted, however, that even with the best will, a handful of soldiers could not undertake the task of a whole army.

The problem has already arisen at base in the south where security has deteriorated so much since the departure of U.N. troops that humanitarian organisations have evacuated all foreign workers.

In Mogadishu on Wednesday, the French International Action Against Hunger organisation accused UNOSOM troops of failing to respond to requests for assistance.

The organisation said foreign soldiers were now more concerned with their own safety than with protecting NGOs or pursuing bandits.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Iraq near pre-war strength — magazine

WASHINGTON (R) — Iraq's military has regained much of its pre-Gulf war strength, U.S. News and World Report magazine reported Saturday. The magazine, citing intelligence sources in London, said in its latest edition that while the Iraqi army was only half as large as it was before being defeated by a U.S.-led coalition in 1991, it has regained 80 per cent of its pre-war fire power. It said that while Iraq before the war had about 5,500 tanks, more than half of those were obsolete Soviet-built T-54s and T-59s. The country now has about 2,500 tanks but most of them are modern T-72 Soviet-built ones. The Iraqi air force, which suffered heavy losses, is now flying an estimated 400 combat-ready aircraft, the magazine said. Many Iraqi jets were flown to Iran to escape the conflict. Baghdad is still trying to get back many of them. The report said Iraq had rebuilt its defence industry to 200 factories.

Group demands release of TV reporters

ANKARA (AP) — A Turkish human rights group on Saturday appealed to separatist Kurdish rebels to release two reporters abducted earlier this week. The independent Human Rights Association said there was no justification to the kidnappers. Kurdish guerrillas abducted Kutlu Esenemir and Recep Ozturk while they were on an assignment for a Muslim fundamentalist television station in southeastern Turkey on Wednesday. The guerrillas in November barred reporters from travelling to the Kurdish-dominated region, threatening violators with death after alleging their coverage was pro-government. "Journalists cannot be banned from functioning even under war conditions," the group said. Fourteen journalists have been killed in southeastern Turkey over the past two years. The guerrillas of the Kurdish Labour Party have been fighting for autonomy in the region since 1984. The clashes with government forces have killed about 10,000 people.

Israeli novelist and poet dies

TEL AVIV (AP) — Israeli novelist and poet Pinchas Sadeh died of cancer on Saturday, Israel Radio reported. He was 64. The Polish-born Sadeh immigrated to Palestine in 1934, and his early poetry expressed the Zionist ideals of those years. In the 1960s, he turned inward and his work became more personal. Among Sadeh's works were the poetry collections "Burden of Dumb" and "Life as a Parable" as well as the novels "One Man's Condition" and "Death of Avimelech". Sadeh died at Jerusalem's Hadassah hospital, the radio said. Funeral arrangements were not complete.

Two held for kidnapping Algerian Islamist

ALGIERS (R) — Two men suspected of involvement in the November kidnapping of a moderate Algerian Islamist later found with his throat slit have been arrested, the state news agency AP said Saturday. Mohammad Bouslimani, a founder of the moderate Islamist party Hamas, was kidnapped on Nov. 26 by four gunmen from his home in Blida 50 kilometres south of Algiers. Algerian television reported on Friday that Mr. Bouslimani had been found with his throat slit in a mountainous region near the town of Al Aouf about 50 kilometres southwest of Algiers. APs, quoting security service sources, named the suspects as Nacer Guitoun, an agronomist, and Zerani Rachid, a civil servant and local religious leader.

Ex-Bank Leumi chief returns for trial in Israel

TEL AVIV (R) — Ernst Japhet, the former chairman of Bank Leumi wanted in connection with a banking scandal that cost the government more than \$9 billion, has returned to Israel for trial. "It always good to come back to Israel," he said on Friday at Tel Aviv Airport. Mr. Japhet, 72, returned from the United States after the Justice Ministry said it had cancelled an extradition request and promised he would not be arrested. Mr. Japhet and other top commercial bankers in Israel were implicated by a state inquiry into the manipulation of bank share prices which collapsed in 1983. The government bailed out shareholders and paid more than \$9 billion for bank assets worth far less after the collapse of shares that had been widely regarded as a non-risk investment. Mr. Japhet quit Bank Leumi in 1986 and left for New York soon afterwards with a \$4.5 million retirement package from the bank. The "golden handshake" caused a public uproar, forcing the bank to cut his monthly pension from \$28,000 to \$13,000. Many Israelis lost their life savings in the collapse. A verdict is expected on Feb. 16 in the trial of the other commercial bankers charged with manipulating the share prices. No date has been set for the opening of Mr. Japhet's trial.

California man denied default judgment

FRESNO, California (AP) — An exiled Iraqi who produces political broadcasts in California has lost a legal battle involving what he says was a plot by the Iraqi government to murder him. Sargon Dadesho, who has lived in the United States since 1965, had filed a \$22.6 million lawsuit against his former government, but it was ignored. He then applied in Fresno's U.S. District Court for a default judgment. That was denied earlier this month by Judge Robert Coyle who ruled there was not enough evidence to prove that Iraq broke racketeering laws, conspired to deprive Mr. Dadesho of his rights or plotted to kill him. Another court previously agreed there was a plot against Mr. Dadesho. In August 1992, Andri Khoshaba of Modesto, California, was sentenced to five years in prison for contracting with an Iraqi agent to kill Mr. Dadesho for \$50,000. Mr. Dadesho has until early March to present evidence to the court that the Iraqi government was behind the plot. Mr. Dadesho thinks he was targeted because he makes radio and television shows that criticise Iraqi President Saddam Hussein.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 77311-19

PROGRAMME TWO

17:30 ... Le Monde Sous Marin

18:30 ... Magazine Local

19:00 ... News in French

19:15 ... The weekly sport magazine

19:30 ... News in Hebrew

20:00 ... News in Arabic

20:30 ... The Torkom

21:10 ... Thirty-second

22:00 ... Feature Film: "Night Nurse"

22:30 ... Feature Film: "Night Nurse"

PRAYER TIMES

05:07 ... Fair

06:27 ... (Sunrise) Dhuhr

11:49 ... Asr

17:11 ... Maghrib

18:30 ... Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swieifieh.

Tel: 810740

Assemblies of God Church, Tel.

632785

Home News

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ATTENTION TO ART: Her Royal Highness Princess Haya Sunday visited the Royal Cultural Centre (RCC) and is briefed on the centre's activities, especially the RCC Ballet Group which is rehearsing to present a full performance of Swan Lake.

More engineers find jobs — JEA

AMMAN (Petra) — Increasing numbers of engineers are finding jobs, and the unemployment rate among them now stands 3.5 per cent, according to Jordan Engineers Association (JEA) Training and Employment Department Director Hisham Khreisat.

Mr. Khreisat attributed the job increase to the boom in the construction and industrial sectors.

In a statement Sunday, Mr. Khreisat said that strenuous efforts on the part of JEA, in cooperation with government and private organisations, have also been instrumental in reducing the rate of unemployment among the estimated 32,500 Jordanian engineers over the past two years.

VTC for a long period, said Mr. Khreisat.

He said that a JD 120 monthly salary is paid to engineers in training, adding that most of these trainees find jobs afterwards.

According to Mr. Khreisat, other newly-graduated engineers are given training courses with the Jordanian Armed Forces and the Royal Scientific Society (RSS), noting that last year, 40 engineers benefited from such courses and 80 others were expected to benefit from the 1994 courses.

He said that the Ministry of Public Works and Housing last year offered training programmes to 130 engineers, and it is hoped that the ministry will increase the number this year.

Austrian cellist, pianist to perform

By Jean-Claude Elias

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Joining the French, the American, the British and the German in presenting fine classical music concerts in Jordan, the Austrian embassy, in cooperation with the National Music Conservatory — Noor Al Hussein Foundation, has invited two exceptional musicians to perform at the Royal Cultural Centre in Amman tonight.

The recital by Kitt and Medjimorec is meant to be first in a series that will bring more talented Austrian performers to the country.

Larger classical ensembles from Austria are planning to visit Jordan in the near future.

Kitt and Medjimorec studied music in famous institutions like the Vienna Academy of Music and the Mozarteum.

More important however than their impressive academic background are the highly flattering critiques they have received from the international press such as the Daily Telegraph of London, Die Presse of Vienna and the Times of London: "Before all, Florian Kitt is an intelligent musician," "The interpretation was masterful."

Ministry Secretary General Suleiman Al Rousan Sunday

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ Plastic art exhibition by artist Shaker Abu Ghazzeh at the Phoenix Gallery for Culture and Art.
- ★ Art exhibition by Syrian artist Yasser Hammoud at Baladna Art Gallery (Wasfi Al Tal Street).
- ★ Exhibition by Lebanese artist Hussein Madli at Darat Al Funun of the Abd Al Hameed Shoman Foundation. Also showing the "permanent" exhibition of 54 Arab contemporary artists. (Tel. 643251/2)
- ★ Exhibition on the art of architecture at the French Cultural Centre.
- ★ Art exhibition by Suha Nouris entitled "Landscapes" at the Hotel Inter-Continental (8:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m.).

FILMS

- ★ Film entitled "Pekin" at the French Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.
- ★ Long film entitled "Le Testament Du Docteur Cordelier" at the French Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.

Noor Al Hussein Foundation The Jubilee School Teachers Needed

Noor Al Hussein Foundation announces the Jubilee School's need for male/female teachers in the following fields: Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Arabic, English, Computer, Social Studies, Electronics, Counseling, and Physical Education.

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For more information, please call:

Mrs. Laila Al Saket Tel. 606992/3/4
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N.B.:
- Vacancies for counseling and physical education are restricted to males only.
- Application forms should be submitted no later than Feb. 28, 1994.

WHAT'S GOING ON

* Film in Arabic entitled "The Land of Dreams" at the Phoenix Gallery for Culture and Art at 6:00 p.m.

CONCERT & DRAMA

- ★ Concert at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.
- ★ Drama in Arabic entitled "The Question" at the Royal Cultural Centre (11:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.).

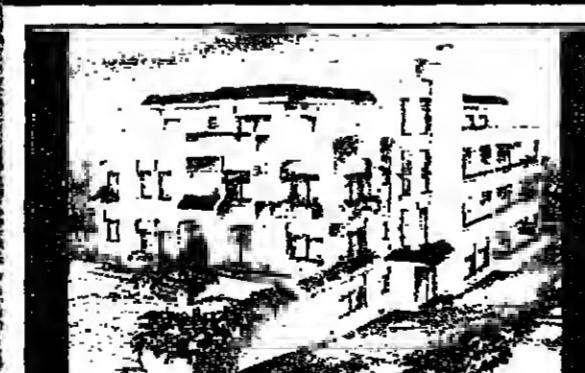
LECTURES

- ★ Lecture entitled "The Negotiations With the Israelis: Where Did It Get To And What Are The Prospects?" by Palestinian ambassador in Cairo Sa'id Kamal at Abdul Hamid Shoman Foundation in Jabal Amman at 6:00 p.m.
- ★ Lecture by Ms. Nelly Lami entitled "Japanese Cultural Nature Worship" with slides show at the Young Women's Christian Association" on Tuesday (1 February) at 10:00 a.m.

SUPERBOWL

- ★ Superbowl match between the Buffalo Bills and the National Football League to be screened at the Americas Center at 4:00 p.m.

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Report faults decision makers, bureaucracy for extensive agricultural research problems

By Ian Atalla
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A report to the second and last day of a seminar designed to prepare a national agricultural research strategy criticised government decision makers, management and bureaucracy for problems faced in this sector.

The report, presented by Aowar Batikhi of the National Centre for Agricultural Research and Technology Transfer (NCARTT), concluded that agricultural research in

Jordan at present faced extensive problems in the areas of management and personnel. In addition to the problems of lack of coherence, intercommunication and coordination in agricultural research management departments, Dr. Batikhi cited lack of care among government decision makers for the value of agricultural research, cramping bureaucracy and low pay and poor incentives for researchers and research assistants.

He said such factors lead to low morale and enthusiasm, adding that many researchers face poor living conditions and transportation facilities in remote areas of Jordan, as well as a lack of trust towards researchers and assistants from local farmers in those areas.

The report concluded that extensive work was needed to improve factors affecting agricultural research on all fronts, including increased funding for research equipment and better incentives for research workers. NCARTT Director General Mahmoud Duwairi told the

Jordan Times that "we have our research stations, we have our good facilities, and I think they are the best in the Middle East region. But at this time we do not have all the human resources available."

An improvement which is expected to take place was the establishment of a new national information centre and library for agricultural research at NCARTT within the next few months. He said the centre would be open to all agricultural students, professors, and researchers.

The importance of the library, he said, was that it would improve the current deficiency of dependable information resources and files for agricultural specialists in Jordan.

He added that in its upcoming research efforts, NCARTT would be "emphasising the water aspect of agriculture. We have set up a new programme for water and irrigation management and hope to be working in close coordination with the Ministry of Water and Irrigation."

Ministry approves imports of saplings

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Agriculture Sunday approved the importing of fruit saplings by private nursery owners.

A ministry statement said that farmers may obtain licences to import a limited number of fruit trees, which are in short supply in Jordan, for the sole purpose of commercial cultivation on their own farms.

It said that Minister of Agriculture Mohammad Mahdi Farhan has instructed ministry inspectors to tour the farms in question and ensure that their owners abide by the regulations, adding that violators would be subject to fines.

According to the ministry

statement, Jordan produces four million fruit trees at its nurseries, of which three million are for local planning and the balance are slated for export.

But the ministry noted that while nurseries produce sufficient olive and citrus fruit saplings, the country is still lacking in apple trees and grape vines.

In June last year, the ministry allowed nursery owners to import apple saplings and rare strains such as avocado, pistachio loquats and palm tree saplings.

The statement said that the ministry would provide supervision and technical help to nurseries in cultivation and production of fruit trees.

Flood stranded family receives aid

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Social Development Sunday provided cash and in kind assistance to a seven-member family that became homeless last Sunday when heavy rains flooded their houses in the Wadi Haddadeh stream, under street level.

Amman Municipality workshops were constructing a culvert on the stream, but were forced to stop work because of the rainfall.

visited the family and handed them the emergency assistance.

The family's house is located alongside Wadi Haddadeh stream, under street level.

Amman Municipality workshops were constructing a culvert on the stream, but were forced to stop work because of the rainfall.

The man told police the immigrants were driving a white car, and he had no further details about them, the police report said.

On Sunday three more people fell victim to two men claiming they were officials.

A 27-year-old reported to police that two people stopped

him while he was walking R.Y.M. told police the two, one wearing an official uniform, stopped him and demanded to search him. After they finished, he said, they asked him to head to a nearby police station for further investigations and disappeared. The victim told police he checked his wallet and found that his money was missing.

He told police the two were driving a blue car. No further details were available.

In another incident, a 67-year-old man reported to police that two men, claiming they were military officials and driving a black car approached him on a farm road while he was walking.

One of the men was wearing a military uniform, according to the victim.

Police search for robbers posing as uniformed officers

By Rana Husseini

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Police are searching for people who impersonated military officials recently, and robbed several citizens in different parts of the Kingdom, according to police reports.

Four people were robbed by impostors who, according to police reports, first posed as officials to 70-year-old shepherds.

The shepherd, who was identified as A.A.A., told police he was tending his sheep when two people approached him, one wearing an official uniform, and told him they were investigating a crime in the area.

He added that the two men asked him if he was carrying any weapon, then they asked to search him.

The shepherd said that when the two men left, he checked for his wallet and discovered it was missing. He said his wallet contained JD 120.

The man told police the immigrants were driving a white car, and he had no further details about them, the police report said.

On Sunday three more people fell victim to two men claiming they were officials.

A 27-year-old reported to police that two people stopped

Settler, 2 soldiers wounded

(Continued from page 1)

On Saturday two Israeli soldiers were slightly wounded when activists threw a grenade at their jeep as it drove through the Rafah refugee camp, near the Moria settlement, Palestinians said.

The activists belonged to a cell of the Fatah Hawks, the armed wing of Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat's Fatah movement. The cell was

set up to avenge the death of a Hawks member killed by Israeli troops on Nov. 29, sources said.

Following the September autonomy accord Mr. Arafat ordered an end to armed attacks on Israelis.

Military sources said the army imposed a curfew in the Rafah camp and launched a

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Features

Right to life highlighted by food, medicine issue

By Waleed Sadi

THREE cheers for His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan the Regent for expeditiously providing so openly and effectively the necessary political will necessary to get to the bottom of the "food and drug" crisis so courageously exposed by the minister of health, Dr. Abdul Rahim Malhas. It so happens that the food, water and medicine that people consume and the air they breath go to the heart of the right to life that all existing human rights instruments religiously enshrine and cherish. On a scale of one to ten, the right to life occupies the first seat under any system of government. Yet, amidst the occupation with civil and political human rights, the right to life has been compromised across the board no only in our country, but practically all countries, either by dire neglect of environmental considerations or by deprivation of adequate health system or even lack of economic development that denies many peoples of the world a fair opportunity to gain their livelihood. Even the most advanced societies have been caught hushing up scandals affecting life per se.

The recent shocking disclosures in the U.S. that nuclear development was carried out in such a way as to purposely jeopardise the life of many innocent Americans in a bid to test the effect of radiation is a classic example. When industrial countries which are supposed to set an example for others use

their own people as guinea pigs, no wonder developing countries have not been encouraged yet to adopt an environmental culture that can protect peoples' health and lives from man-made disasters. In retrospect, some of the threats to life in developed countries due for example to radiation from nuclear energy whether peaceful or military or sheer blood contamination, as happened in France last year, are small in magnitude and dimension in comparison to related threats in underdeveloped nations.

Yet, the struggle to eliminate such threat in the Third World must be promoted and religiously upheld since they stand to profit from the painful experiences of the richer countries and by so doing avoid their costly trials and errors. It is therefore most unfortunate that the developing countries, including Jordan, are not giving environmental considerations and control over the quality of their foodstuff, water resources and the worthiness of the air their peoples breathe the necessary priority on the false premise that any such priority would impede their economic development especially in the industrial sector.

This is obviously a callous and short-sighted view of the issue. The clean-up bill and the costs of other necessary remedial measures in the intermediate and long range terms, could be economically catastrophic in comparison to their corresponding expenses at the start of the problem.

Against this backdrop, the stunning disclosures of Dr.

Malhas about the state of the food and drugs consumed in this country is a blessing in human rights terms. An earlier exposure of the problem would have made the cost of its treatment much less, even though we have yet to determine the extent of the problem. The main point here is that the issue has been given prominence at all levels, official, public or private. The full involvement of all sectors of society in Jordan in the ongoing debate on the subject is of course a healthy feature of the democratic process.

where it became contaminated and then pumped to Amman at a considerable cost to the country neighbouring on JD 45 million is a grim reminder of lack of adequate governmental concern about public welfare.

Last summer, a respected Swiss journal published a report that blood contaminated with HIV was shipped to Jordan and other Middle Eastern countries. This is a very serious allegation that requires verification and an adequate response from the government. Yet, there has been no reaction or denial from our authorities of this news report till this moment in time.

One can go on listing other matters that affect the right to life in Jordan, but this would not be the central issue. The main point is to cultivate officials who can develop real concern about such issues. Once that is accomplished, the public can be awakened to the facts to life and made to get involved in a responsible way to address such problems. In democracy, the people can also put the process of investigation into motion by sober and direct participation in the dissemination of accurate information. The necessary political will to activate a profound and effective scrutiny of all dangers to life in the country can therefore be galvanised by the people themselves or by the government. We are indeed fortunate that in the case of Dr. Malhas there has been a simultaneous and parallel official and public interest. This augurs well for the national decision to get to the bottom of this basic human rights problem this time.

Human Rights File

The significance of these recent revelations obviously go beyond food and drugs. Once the Pandora box is opened on such subjects, other related aspects would become also centres of interest. The indiscriminate use of pesticides and insecticides in the Jordan Valley has yet to attract official attention in spite of repeated sounding of alarms about them. I personally conducted a limited survey of farmers in the Jordan Valley and discovered that there is no supervision whatsoever of the use of such chemicals. The case of how clean water was pumped to the East Ghor canal few years ago.

Arafat, Peres closer to accord

(Continued from page 1)

applause.

"We took on one of the most complicated issues in modern of age... something which looked like a phenomenon without a solution," Mr. Peres told the conference of political and business leaders.

"Many of us feel that if we can solve the Palestinian dispute, all disputes in the world are soluble," he said. "Let's try our hands, let's mobilise our... hearts," he said to loud

applause.

Mr. Peres said on the eve of the talks that he came to Davos "with a desire to sign" an agreement, "but it can very well be that there will only be the opportunity to talk."

"We are holding negotiations on sensitivities, on nations, very difficult sensitivities," Mr. Peres said. "Every word has a different echo."

A senior member of the PLO had raised hopes early

Sunday that a compromise had been reached.

Yasser Arafat Rabbo, a senior adviser to Mr. Arafat, said the trade-off reached in the overnight session was acceptable to the PLO, but that he did not know whether the Israeli government would accept it.

"We have a compromise on the table. If both sides say yes, then we have an agreement," said Mr. Arafat Rabbo. "We accepted."

Israel army sources quoted

Palestinian sources as saying that the PLO had agreed to a compromise on crossings over the Jordan River, but that there was no agreement about the town of Rafah.

Rafah is a Gaza Strip town on the border with Egypt where Israeli soldiers have been subject to frequent attacks.

Mr. Musa said the Palestinians and Israelis had made "definite progress towards agreement that would clear the way for implementation of the deal."

"We believe the Middle East is going to move steadily towards an era of peace, justice and development," he declared.

Mr. Musa confirmed that Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak had invited the two sides to Cairo for the final signing which he hoped would be very soon.

Settlers defiant
Jewish settlers bent on

founding a new settlement in the occupied West Bank defied Israeli troops Saturday night for the second day in succession, blocking roads leading to the site between Hebron and Bethlehem, military sources said.

They put up barricades in an attempt to stop troops approaching the site near the existing settlement of Gush Etzion south of Jerusalem. However, troops took over the site and proclaimed it a military area off limits to the press and public.

About 100 settlers opposed to the accord on autonomy for the Palestinians in Jericho and the Gaza Strip moved onto the site and camped there in tents on Thursday night.

Soldiers made several attempts to evict the settlers who came back as soon as the troops left. On Friday, the troops had dismantled the tents and arrested three of the settlers.

On Wednesday, about 50 Jewish settlers occupied an empty house near the Kyrat Arba settlement near Hebron to found a settlement. One said the law stopping Jews settling there was "immoral and deserves to be broken."

The rush to set up illegal settlements is part of a plan backed by hardline settlers to "double" the number of settlements in the occupied territories in protest at the Sept. 13 accord on autonomy for Palestinians in Jericho and the Gaza Strip.

The plan was initially launched by the council of Jewish

settlements in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip but was subsequently taken up by a more radical group.

Housing Minister Binyamin Ben Eliezer warned that the government would "allow no one to break the law." Heavy troop reinforcements have been deployed to the Kyrat Arba and Hebron area which is a stronghold of opposition to the autonomy deal.

Syria wants Israel to withdraw fully from the Golan, a strategic plateau occupied by Israel in the 1967 Middle East war. Israel wants full normalisation of ties with Damascus in return for a partial withdrawal.

Syria wants to hear something new from the Israeli side to activate the Washington talks. What is required by Israel is a serious position that would respond to the initiative made by President Hafez Al Assad...

Syria had reiterated that peace is a strategic option for her and that the peace talks should achieve the aspired results but this depends on Israel's response to the call for full withdrawal from the occupied Arab lands..." Tisreen said.

The paper also reiterated Syria's rejection of partial or separate peace treaties with the Jewish state and said such deals could not bring peace to the region.

Syria: Bilaterals encouraging

(Continued from page 1)

opened a meeting in Cairo Sunday on Middle East arms control with a renewed plea to make the region free of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons.

Nabil Fahmi, political adviser to Foreign Minister Amr Musa, said the first step should be confidence building measures by all the region's countries. A veiled call for Israel to be more open about its nuclear weapons programme.

Mr. Fahmi's comment raised the essential problem in Mideast arms control, resistance by Arab states to controls on other weapons while Israel possesses nuclear warheads.

A year ago, Egypt and other Arab countries refused to join an international chemical weapons ban, saying Israel must first sign the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Israel refuses official comment on its nuclear arms, saying only it will not be the first to introduce nuclear weapons in the region.

Mr. Fahmi's plea was made to an experts' workshop held under Middle East multilateral peace talks on arms control. The representatives from 38 countries will meet through Thursday.

An Israeli delegation headed by Hanan Baran arrived Sunday to take part in the meeting. Syria and Lebanon are not attending.

'Assailant(s) seized documents'

(Continued from page 1)

taking and suicide bombing attacks became rampant.

In the past year, the government has intensified its campaign to lure foreigners back; claiming Beirut was now secure again.

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Russian prime minister woos West but sends wrong signals

DAVOS, Switzerland (R) — Russia's Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin wooed Western business and political leaders this weekend with ringing pledges that there would be no return to a Soviet-style economy.

But he appeared to shut off any chance of winning financial aid from major governments and international institutions by setting inflation targets far higher than outside lenders view as tolerable in a market

reform package.

He may have disturbed the West with a confidently couched bid at the Davos World Economic Forum for Russia's admission not only to the "Group of Seven" club of major industrial powers but also to the European Union.

"Although he is making the right noises about going ahead with reform, I think he is showing poor understanding of the impact of some of the things he says on the outside world,"

said Swedish economist Anders Aslund.

Mr. Aslund, who resigned last week as an adviser to Russia's government when key reformers dropped out of the new Chernomyrdin cabinet, told Reuters the 54-year-old prime minister seemed to have accepted a fresh surge in inflation.

On Saturday, Mr. Chernomyrdin told a news conference at the forum — an annual gathering of top businessmen

and politicians from round the world — that his new team hoped to keep monthly inflation in the first half of 1994 to around 20 per cent.

"By December, I think we can reduce it to between 15 and 18 per cent," declared the prime minister, appointed by President Boris Yeltsin in December 1992 as a centrist figure who could bring conservatives and liberal reformers together. But the figures would mark an inflation jump from the 12

per cent achieved in December last year amid tight controls under then finance minister Boris Yeltsin Fyodorov, and were more than double Mr. Chernomyrdin's own predictions just over a week ago.

"What it means is that in effect he has abandoned the struggle against inflation," said Mr. Aslund. "If they recognise the cost of their policies will be that high, it is bound in reality to be even higher."

"It means any international financing for government economic stabilisation programmes will be foregone," he pointed out.

Strangely, Mr. Chernomyrdin's upward revision of his own forecasts came on the eve

of a visit to Moscow by an International Monetary Fund team to try to reach agreement on a reform programme and a \$1.5 billion loan.

IMF officials make clear they expect tough action to pull inflation down before they will release any financing, but all the signals from Mr. Chernomyrdin suggest he is ready to increase inflationary cheap credits to state industry and agriculture.

Mr. Fyodorov, also at the forum, has predicted that freer credit under Mr. Chernomyrdin and central bank chief Viktor Gerashchenko — defended fiercely by the prime minister at his news conference — will bring inflation of at

least 30 per cent by mid-year. Grigory Yavlinsky, another leading Russian economist of the younger generation in Davos, told reporters he expected a rate of 50 per cent by the end of the summer. "At that point, we will be in hyper-inflation," he said.

But Mr. Aslund, a long-time analyst of the old Soviet Union with close contacts across the political spectrum in Moscow, said he saw no hidden agenda for return to communist economics behind Mr. Chernomyrdin's policies.

"They think they can spend their way out of inflation by increasing production. But in present Russian conditions that is hogwash," he said.

The Swedish economist said even the communists and agrarians in the new Russian parliament elected in December — and who are believed to exert an influence on the prime minister — were in favour of market reforms.

"They are more like lobbyists for the heavy industrial and farm chiefs who want to tilt the market in their own favour," said Mr. Aslund.

The prime minister himself told reporters in Davos he had learned what the Soviet system of central planning really meant as chief of the gas industry in earlier days. "There can be no return to that," he declared firmly.

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Poland leftist leader says economy priority

DAVOS, Switzerland (R) — Poland's new left-wing government is committed to economic reform, and growth and financial discipline take precedence over social programmes, the leader of the country's former communists says.

Aleksander Kwasniewski, youthful chairman of the Democratic Left Alliance (SLD), the major party in Poland's left-wing coalition, reassured business leaders at the World Economic Forum at the weekend that market reforms remained on track.

"The priority of the government is the development of the economy and growth in GDP," Mr. Kwasniewski said.

"The main elements (of reforms) are continuing and must be continued. There's no other way for our country to move to democracy ... a market economy ... and an integrated Europe," he told the annual forum at the Swiss ski resort of Davos.

The SLD party of reformed communists formed a coalition government with the Polish Peasants Party (PSL), whose roots also go back to the communist era, in November after the two emerged as the strongest parties from September's elections.

Mr. Kwasniewski, 39, was himself minister for youth and sport in the last communist

government, which collapsed in 1989, allowing the Solidarity trade union to take over and signalling the end of communism's power across eastern Europe.

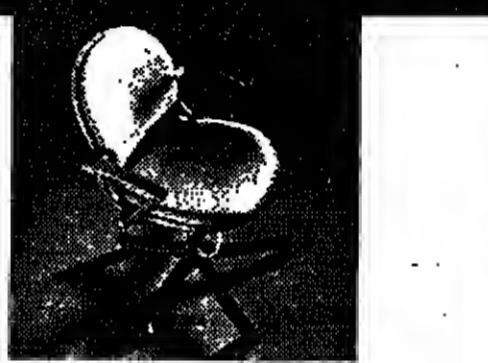
In September it seemed as if the SLD victory could be part of a neo-communist tide sweeping eastern Europe, as ordinary people revolted against the austerity of harsh economic reforms.

In fact the SLD is more like a Western social democratic party, backing privatisation, foreign investment, a tight budget, and Polish membership in the European Union and NATO.

It did campaign on the need to expand social programmes to protect people suffering from the impact of the shock therapy of the first reformist governments.

But since taking power the left-wing government has

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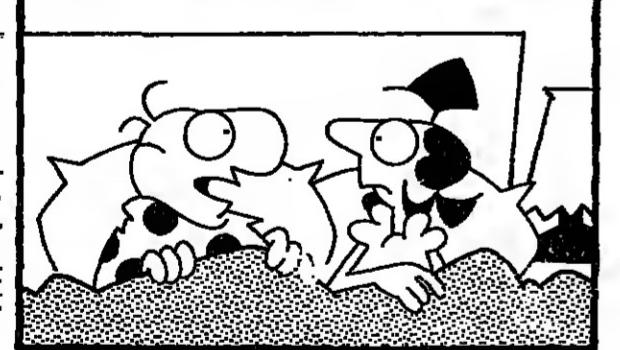


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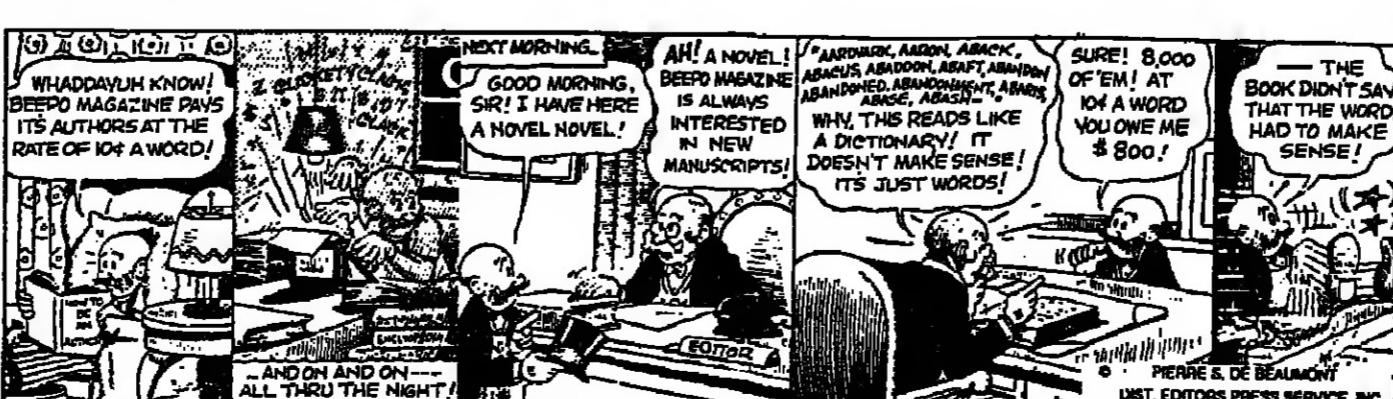
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Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR MONDAY JANUARY 31, 1994

By Thomas S. Pearson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation
GENERAL TENDENCIES: This last day of the month finds you with a split centre of attention and a need to build up better feelings with others by acts of courtesy and consideration. Resist an urge to speak abruptly to a regular associate.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) While you are anxious to enjoy yourself, it is not necessary that you spend a great deal of money doing it. Forget eccentric ideas, too.

Taurus: (April 20 to May 18) If you labour industriously and are alert to new ideas, outlets, this can be a day of real accomplishment for you. Keep busily occupied and it will end.

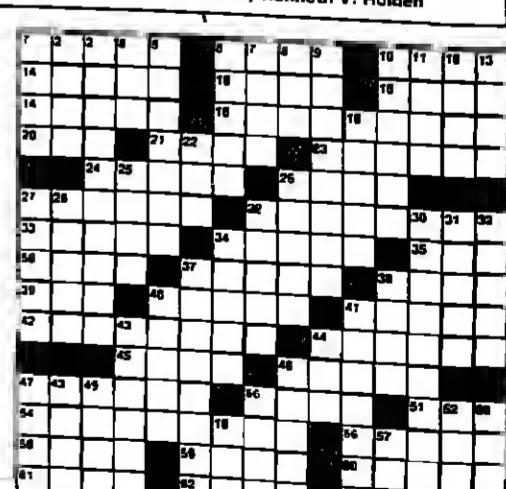
GEMINI: (May 21 to June 18) By leaving your work and going off for a good time with a associate could have dire results that could take a long time to live down.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) It is fine for you to enjoy yourself today, but take care you do not use funds that are entrusted to you in some business affairs or you will certainly regret it later.

LEO: (July 22 to August 19) Be sure you carry through with any promises made to associates, though it means giving up comforts or getting into an argument at home.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 20) Try not to let a secret anxiety keep you from getting hard and keep mum.

THE Daily Crossword by Kenneth V. Holden

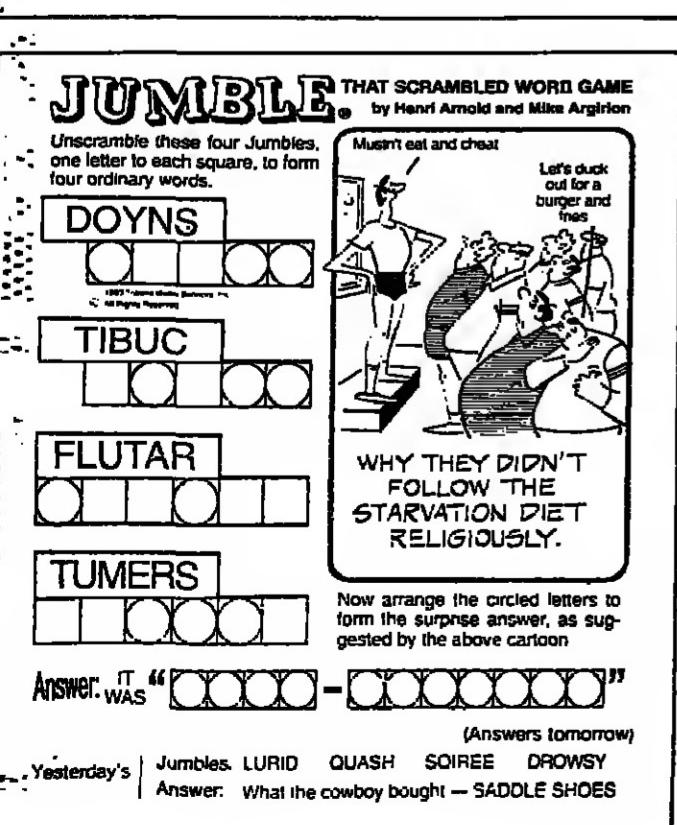


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Yesterday's Puzzle Solved:

| | | |
|---------|----------|--------|
| CAPRI | THRU | SWALI |
| ARHIA | HERA | SHALI |
| JUHTISE | ANDROTTE | BALI |
| EWE | TOLL | BAKIR |
| MOR | ARAN | OPEN |
| ARFEL | LIV | STILE |
| TAUTY | SELLIE | WOM |
| ITSI | BULL | PAHLI |
| NEED | FEAR | THREAS |
| SHADES | KEEN | EROS |
| ALLAE | OGEE | NODDE |
| HERD | LEED | GOOD |

43 Used a people
44 Alphabet run
45 Logos
46 Logos
47 Logos
48 Logos
49 Sacred image
50 From a distance
51 S2 Yemen capital
52 Disorder
53 Disorder
54 Gershwin
55 Cove



Yesterday's Jumbles: LURID QUASH SOIREE DROWSY
Answer: What the cowboy bought — SADDLE SHOES

NATO could act immediately after U.N. green light in Bosnia

BRUSSELS (R) — NATO could act immediately if the United Nations asked it to provide air power to help route U.N. troops in the besieged Bosnian town of Srebrenica or to reopen Tuzla Airport for relief aid, a NATO military source said Sunday.

"We have all the resources and the procedures in place. We could act immediately," the source said.

U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali said Friday he had delegated to his special representative in the former Yugoslavia, Yasushi Akashi, the authority to approve any request for close air support from the commander of the U.N. Protection Force in either Tuzla or Srebrenica.

Until then, he had insisted on retaining the right to approve first use of air power provided by NATO countries.

NATO, which has an existing mandate to provide support to U.N. forces, has for months had bombers, ground attack aircraft and fighters patrolling over Bosnia.

"We have aircraft overflying the area all the time. Conceivably, the response time could be in a matter of minutes to help U.N. troops," one military source said.

But he stressed that the operation would have to take place in stages with a minimum amount of force used.

"I think in Srebrenica, especially, there would be a minimum amount of force as the troops rotation seems to be working better now. Tuzla Airport is much more complicated," the NATO source said.

Du. U.N. peacekeepers have been trying to get into Srebrenica to replace about 150 Canadian soldiers there while Serb forces have encircled the airport in Tuzla.

Dr. Ghali gave Mr. Akashi the authority to take action in

the two areas after studying a report detailing military plans in the besieged towns. The report followed a NATO summit in Brussels this month which asked the U.N. to draw up plans.

Details of the report have not been made available. NATO said it has been in daily contact with the U.N. to draw up the plans.

While Dr. Ghali gave the go-ahead for close air support for U.N. peacekeepers, he did not indicate his view on offensive action, or air strikes where specific targets were chosen.

One NATO source said there would have to be an "absolutely dire situation" in Bosnia, possibly a big attack on U.N. peacekeepers, before air strikes were launched.

"Public opinion would really have to be behind us before air strikes were launched," he added.

Some NATO members, such as Canada, have strong reservations about air strikes fearing they will put aid workers and U.N. peacekeepers themselves at too much risk.

Britain Sunday decided to resume aid convoys in Bosnia after a three-day suspension triggered by the murder of an aid worker.

The British Overseas Development Administration (ODA) which is responsible for humanitarian relief said its operations would restart Monday and that convoy teams in Bosnia were keen to get back to work.

The ODA halted aid distribution following the killing of driver Paul Goodall Thursday when he was abducted in central Bosnia with two colleagues who escaped with gun-shot wounds.

Suspected Muslim bandits were blamed for the attack.

The Muslim-led Bosnian government told the U.N.

Saturday that four men were being questioned.

The incident was a fresh blow to U.N. efforts to get food and other supplies to almost three million people trapped by the 22-month civil war between Muslims, Croats and Serbs.

Convoys have suffered constant harassment by all three sides.

U.N. peacekeepers said convoys were again moving between Zenica and Kakanj after being blocked by starving villagers last week.

"The route is covered with snow but now free of bandits," U.N. Protection Force spokesman Bill Aikman said in Sarajevo.

British General Sir Michael Rose, the new UNPROFOR commander in Bosnia, had a first meeting with Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic and told reporters:

"I am grateful to Dr. Karadzic for the assistance that he has given us in showing that the convoys are running freely in this part of the country."

Gen. Rose said he and Dr. Karadzic had discussed means of demilitarising sensitive areas of Sarajevo which has been under Serb siege throughout the war and was hit by 60 artillery shells Saturday.

Col. Aikman reported Bosnia's battle zones were relatively quiet at the weekend with the exception of the southern town of Mostar where Croats were continuing to heavily bombard besieged Muslims.

Croatian Foreign Minister Mate Granic expressed his "regret" over the deaths of three Italian journalists in southern Bosnia Friday, in a letter to his Italian counterpart Beniamino Andreatta published by the Croatian press Sunday.

In the letter Mr. Granic expressed his "deep concern and

regret" over the incident, but refrained from openly condemning the Bosnian Croat (HVO) forces responsible for the shelling which killed the journalists.

Mr. Andreatta had written to Mr. Granic Saturday saying he was certain that "the Croatian government will quickly denounce such a loathsome incident."

The three Italians, who worked for the RAI Broadcasting Network, were killed by HVO shelling in Mostar Friday as they were preparing a report on the orphans' hospital in the besieged Muslim eastern side of the city.

"I once again vigorously condemn these odious crimes and assure you that the Croatian government will not hesitate to participate in an independent investigation to determine the circumstances of this tragic incident," Mr. Granic wrote.

Witnesses said violence erupted after armed activists took control of polling stations at gunpoint and filled ballot boxes, shattering hopes of candidates and the election commission of a clean vote.

The violence broke out despite deployment of more than 30,000 police and paramilitary soldiers at polling stations in the four cities and a government crackdown on unauthorised carrying of arms.

Local officials said the voting was relatively peaceful in Chittagong, Khulna and Rajshahi.

"We had no major problem except for a few incidents of clashes and bombings," one Chittagong official said.

The election commission had warned that anyone involved in violence, disruption of voting and trying to stuff ballot boxes would be jailed for up to 10 years.

Police said they had arrested several people for attacks on polling centres in Dhaka but did not know their identity.

Opposition political parties alleged the assailants belonged to the ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), which denied the charge.

Polls opened at 7 a.m. (0100 GMT) and closed at 3 p.m. (0900 GMT) polling officials said voting in at least seven centres had been postponed.

However, no one at the election commission was immediately available for comment. It had been said earlier that the first results were expected in the late evening.

Nearly three million people had been expected to vote, 1.7 million of them in Dhaka, in the first direct elections for four city mayors and some 200 ward commissioners.

Witnesses said the turnout in the four cities was heavy but irregularities were detected in several voters lists.

"I have been living in this area for 35 years and I have voted in all past elections. This time they have struck off my name," Supreme Court lawyer Matir Rahaman Khan told Reuters at one Dhaka centre.

The police used teargas and clubs to disperse armed mobs attacking polling centres in Dhaka. Witnesses said voters ran for cover as smoke from bombs and teargas filled the air.

In southern Taiwan, the ruling party lost its majority in four city and county councils — the first time it relinquished control over a city or county council since it lost the Chinese civil war and fled to Taiwan in 1949.

"This goes totally contrary to assertions by the Election Commission and the government that the elections will be free and honest," Mohammad Hossain, a teacher, said.

Major political parties, including the BNP and its main rival the Awami League, were contesting the city elections.

Nearly 100 hurt in Bangladesh city polls violence

DHAKA (R) — Nearly 100 people were injured, some of them by bullets, as militants stormed polling centres with guns and bombs during key city elections in Bangladesh Sunday, witnesses and hospitals said.

More than 35 people were admitted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital and dozens of others were discharged after receiving first aid.

"Most of the injuries were caused by splinters from homemade bombs and bullets," said one hospital doctor.

At least 25 people were injured in poll violence in Chittagong, Khulna and Rajshahi — three other cities where voting was held to elect city mayors and ward commissioners.

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Japan coalition leaders eye elections, realignment

TOKYO (R) — Japan's ruling coalition, after pushing through electoral law reform and heavily-diluted anti-graft measures, is readying for elections under a new system possibly by autumn. Its leaders revealed Sunday.

"Since it's going to take until October to set up the new system, elections could come anytime after that," said Yuichi Ichikawa, number two in the coalition's Komeito.

The electoral plan will replace Japan's multi-seat constituencies, making up a 511-seat lower house, with a system combining 300 single-seat districts and 200 allocated on a proportional representation (PR) list.

The downside of the deal was that Mr. Hosokawa had to agree to increase to 300 from 274 the number of single seats — a development expected to bolster a big party like the LDP. Smaller coalition parties would fare better on the PR list.

Mr. Hosokawa also gave in on the most contentious issue — banning corporate donations to individual politicians, which are regarded as the root cause of rampant corruption and Japan's many recent bribery scandals.

The scandal-marred LDP, the pro-business party that ruled for 38 years until its July election defeat, refused to talk compromise until Mr. Hosokawa agreed to scrap his proposed ban and allow candidates 500,000 yen (\$4,500) from any one firm in a year.

"It's very unfortunate but we were forced into giving in on this point... in the future such donations will be banned," Mr. Takemura said, referring to the government's plan to impose the ban five years down the road.

The agreement reached after six years of debate is

Battle underway to seize key Khmer Rouge base

PHNOM PENH (R) — The Cambodian army has started its long awaited campaign to capture the key Khmer Rouge base at northern Anlong Veng, but fighting so far is on a small scale, Defence Minister General Tea Banh said Sunday.

"This is not a big military operation, it's just a troop movement to reconquer the geography," Gen. Tea Banh told Reuters.

He said government military activity around Anlong Veng had increased since the middle of January.

He declined to say how close government soldiers had approached to Anlong Veng.

Anlong Veng lies 310 kilometres due northwest of Phnom Penh, and has served as the Khmer Rouge's key northern headquarters.

The English-language Cambodia Times Sunday carried a front page photograph of government artillery shelling Anlong Veng. An accompanying story cited Defence Ministry sources said the government had ordered the capture of the base by April.

The newspaper said the government force was spearheaded by soldiers from 286th Division which has its headquarters in northwest Samrong about 65 kilometres west of Anlong Veng.

The Maoist-inspired rebels are held responsible for the deaths of one million Cambodians during their "killing fields" reign of terror in the 1970s.

Cambodia's coalition government has offered the insurgents cabinet positions but only if they first declare an immediate ceasefire, open up their zones and demobilise their estimated 2,000-strong fighting force.

Both sides have agreed to establish a "technical working group" to discuss implementation of the plan but negotiations have remained deadlocked because the Khmer Rouge insist there be no preconditions.

Government troop strength in the region is estimated at no more than 2,500 soldiers. Defence analysts say the Khmer Rouge has 1,500 to 2,500 fighters defending the area around Anlong Veng.

Couple barred from taking baby up Andean peak

BUENOS AIRES (R) — An Argentine judge has barred a German couple from taking their two-year-old daughter up the highest mountain in the Americas, local media said Saturday. Israel Jadur, a juvenile court judge in the Andean city of Mendoza said he feared Johanna Rotk could die of altitude sickness on the 22,800-foot (6,959-metre) Aconcagua.

Mountain warden spotted the family, from Eisenach in former east Germany, at 13,800 feet (4,200 metres), saying the parents snuggled Johanna through control points hidden in their equipment. Johanna had already been above 10,000 feet (3,000 metres) in Europe when she was just 22 months old, according to the girl's mother, Angelica, a midwife who said she had studied the effects of altitude on babies in the Himalayas. Mother and daughter were waiting at a base camp while father Wigbert continued the ascent, the

Father breaks silence on missing Italian celebrity

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — The parents of a missing Italian celebrity offered a reward Saturday for her return and expressed the belief someone might be holding her as some kind of "spiritual slave." Ylenia Carrisi, 23, the granddaughter of the late American movie star Tyrone Power, has been missing since New Year's Day.

Romina Power and her husband, both Italian entertainers, would pay handsomely for their daughter's return. "I think she is being held by people against her will. I don't know. I can't explain why. It's just a feeling I have. I might be right. I might be wrong," said Romina Power, who flew here Thursday from Italy with her husband, Al Bano, to help police search for their daughter. "I don't mean just for information. Bring her to us. They will have a very large reward," the mother told

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Zeroual named president; FIS dismisses appointment

ALGERIA (Agencies) — Algeria's backed leadership on Sunday appointed Defence Minister Lamine Zeroual as president, replacing an unelected five-man group that had ruled during the past two years of civil strife.

General Zeroual will keep the defence portfolio and head a country gripped by conflict between Muslim militants and the security forces. He will rule for a three-year period of "transition" aimed at taking the nation back to elections.

Diplomats say his greatest challenge will be to find some way to end the violence, either by a tougher military crackdown or a negotiated settlement with the fundamentalists.

Nearly 2,000 people have been killed since January 1992 when the authorities cancelled a general election which the fundamentalists were poised to win.

The new man, due to be sworn in Monday, is the fourth head of state in just over two years. He replaces the collective presidency, known as the High Council of State (HCEW), which was headed by Ali Kafi.

Gen. Zeroual was named by the High Security Council, responsible for taking key decisions in this economically-



Lamine Zeroual

battered country of 26 million people. Council members include the outgoing presidency, appeared headed for certain victory.

The FIS advance forced President Chadli Benjedid to step down in January 1992. The next day, the authorities cancelled the general election. Mr. Benjedid's successor Mouslim Boudiaf was assassinated in June 1992 and Mr. Kafi took over.

Despite an indefinite state of emergency, a night curfew on much of the country, and more than a score of executions,

there has been no let-up in the killings.

Diplomats said the former general comes to his task with vastly enhanced powers, both because he rules alone rather than by committee and because he has kept the defence portfolio.

An FIS spokesman dismissed the appointment of Gen. Zeroual, saying the government's days were numbered.

"The existence of the government in power has no justification and its days are numbered," said Rahab Kebir, president of the FIS executive in exile.

"After suffering a serious defeat in its so-called national dialogue conference... the junta is trying through these theatrics (Zeroual's appointment) to seek legitimacy," Mr. Kebir said in a statement sent from his home in Germany, ministers and the army chief of staff.

Violence erupted after Algeria's first multi-party general election was scrapped in January 1992. The now-banned Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) had won over 80 per cent of the seats in a first round and Mr. Kafi took over.

"The FIS recalls the only way out of the crisis... is a favourable reply to the demands of the people for their choice of leaders and for the right to live under the protection of an Islamic state after the trial of those who shed the blood of innocents and destroyed the country's prosperity," the statement said.

Iran's official radio said the appointment of Gen. Zeroual would deepen the conflict with Islamic militants.

"This has placed a crisis-ridden country of Algeria on a path that is even more uncertain than before," Tehran Radio said in a commentary.

"The ruling High State Council which cancelled parliamentary elections two years ago and took power illegally has now violated Algeria's constitution once again," said the radio.

Algeria last year broke off diplomatic relations with Iran, accusing it supporting the Muslim fundamentalists.

The radio said some military units had joined a newly formed Islamic liberation army in Algeria.

"With a number of units from the army joining the Islamic liberation army the opposition has achieved a new situation in the political balance of the country. The government cannot ignore this fundamental development," it said.



DAVOS TALKS: Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat (right) and Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres (left) with their aides prior to their talks Sunday in Davos, Switzerland (see page 1)

Aideed plans to form interim government

KAMPALA (Agencies) — The Somali faction headed by warlord Mohammad Farah Aideed said Sunday it planned to set up an interim government in Somalia before the end of March, in a veiled ultimatum to the U.N. peacekeeping force there to leave.

Spokesman for Gen. Aideed's Somali National Alliance (SNA) Mohammad Hassan Awale who accompanied the faction leader to Uganda said the United Nations' peacekeeping force in Somalia (UNOSOM) had outlived its usefulness in the war-torn country now that famine had ended.

"After the creation of an authority in (the capital) Mogadishu and our target is March, disengagement will start and if we need help we shall ask African leaders to provide a peacekeeping force," said Mr. Awale, Aideed's advisor on international affairs.

Gen. Aideed left the Ugandan capital Sunday after a four-day visit during which he had talks with President Yoweri Museveni.

The warlord has repeatedly called for UNOSOM's departure accusing the force of killing thousands of Somalis.

Mr. Awale said Gen. Aideed had "fruitful discussions with President Museveni on the situation in Somalia and the progress towards peace amongst the fighting factions." The meeting took place on Saturday.

Gen. Aideed is going back

to the Kenyan capital, Nairobi, to continue peace negotiations with other Somalia factions, Mr. Awale said.

He is expected to meet representatives from the Somali Salvation Democratic Front, the Somalia National Democratic Union and the Somali National Front, before returning to Mogadishu within the next couple of days," Mr. Awale said.

Gen. Aideed travelled to Uganda from Nairobi on Thursday.

U.S. troops shipped out

Some 220 U.S. troops were shipped out of Mogadishu Sunday to launch a massive sea-borne evacuation of Washington's remaining U.N. peacekeeping contingent after plans for an airlift were scrapped for fear of drawing anti-aircraft fire.

The troops, members of infantry and engineer companies, set off on board the 41-year-old Greek ferry "Mediterranean Sky" on a one-and-a-half-day sea voyage to the Kenyan port of Mombasa. From there they will fly back to their base in Fort Stewart, Georgia.

Captain Bob Costello, who inspected the vessel Saturday, said the sea transport was an "extra precaution decided when we received information that anti-aircraft missiles could be fired at the U.S. forces" in the event of an airlift.

Turkey offers to visit Iran to investigate air strike

TEHRAN (AFP) — Ankara has offered to send a team here to investigate reports that a Turkish air strike on northern Iraq killed nine people and wounded 19 others in Iranian border villages.

The villages in northwestern Azerbaijan province were hit by "several rockets and bombs" after Turkish warplanes attacked a Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) base in northern Iraq Friday, the official Iranian media said Saturday.

There was no word Sunday on whether Iran would agree to receive an investigating team from Turkey. Tehran expressed deep concern about the attack and newspapers close to hardliners condemned it as "adventurism."

Turkish Foreign Minister Hikmet Cetin told his Iranian counterpart Ali Akbar Velayati Saturday Turkey had not intended any hostile act against its neighbour and that it was an accident, the Iranian news agency IRNA reported.

In a telephone-call from Davos, Switzerland, Mr. Cetin said Ankara would send a team to Iran to conduct a joint investigation, would accept its findings, and was prepared to compensate Iran, according to IRNA.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Israel sees 'unprecedented deterrent'

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israel will acquire an unprecedented deterrent force by buying some 20 American F-15E fighter-bombers, Israel's air force commander, General Herzl Bodinger, told Sunday's Haaretz newspaper. Gen. Bodinger said the F-15E, codenamed Strike Eagle, was "an exceptional plane, whose capacities match its high cost, and which proved itself during the Gulf war" to drive Iraqi forces from Kuwait in 1991. It can carry a large quantity of weapons up to 1,600 kilometres from Israel's borders. "This plane increases considerably the airforce's capacities and provides us with a strategic deterrent force that we did not have until now," Gen. Bodinger told the paper. Congressional officials said Thursday the U.S. administration had given the go-ahead on a McDonnell-Douglas Corp. contract to sell to Israel 20 F-15E warplanes. The estimated \$2 billion contract includes an option for Israel to buy five more F-15Es at a later date, according to the officials.

'Japan could build N-bomb quickly'

LONDON (AFP) — Japan possesses all it needs to build a nuclear bomb "very quickly" to counter any nuclear threat by North Korea, according to a secret British Defence Ministry report cited by the Sunday Times. "Japan has acquired all the parts necessary for a nuclear weapon and may even have built a bomb which requires only enriched plutonium for completion," the Sunday Times quoted the report as saying. According to the report — sent last month to the joint intelligence committee, which advises Prime Minister John Major and his cabinet — there is no evidence that Japan has decided to proceed with a nuclear bomb programme or that it has violated its commitments to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). The British Defence Ministry refused to comment on the matter. The Sunday Times quoted the ministry as saying in its report that Japan could be forced to abandon its non-nuclear stance if the crisis over North Korea's nuclear programme is not resolved.

Blast inside Indian cinema injures 18

NEW DELHI (AFP) — At least 18 people were injured Sunday when a bomb exploded inside a packed cinema in the Indian capital minutes after the matinee show ended, triggering a stampede, police said. The bomb, placed underneath a seat in the rear gallery of the Odeon Cinema in downtown Delhi, went off after about 100 of the more than 850 viewers had come out. "There was a loud explosion and a lot of smoke," said theatre employee Jokhan Singh. "There was complete panic. People began screaming and running." Eighteen people were injured, some in the blast and some after running into the glass doors of the main exit in a panic-driven stampede triggered by the explosion, which created a small crater in the floor. The victims were admitted to hospital. No one was seriously injured, police said.

Gunmen wound Egyptian policeman

CAIRO (R) — Unidentified gunmen shot and seriously wounded a policeman on his way to work in the south Egyptian province of Minya on Sunday, security sources said. The gunmen opened fire on Mohammad Darwish Osman in the town of Mallawi, 295 kilometres south of Cairo, hitting him in the chest and legs, the sources said. The assailants escaped. Security officials said Osman was taken to hospital but no further news of his condition was available. Policemen are targets of militants fighting to overthrow the Egyptian government and replace it with an Islamic state but most security personnel fatalities have been in Assiut, the province just south of Minya. Suspected militants ambushed the car of a brigadier in Assiut on Thursday, killing his driver and bodyguard. At least 279 people have been killed and 670 wounded in militant-related violence in Egypt since 1992.

Blast at pro-Kurdish office causes damage

ANKARA (AP) — An explosion at the pro-Kurdish Democracy Party office early Sunday caused heavy damage, Anatolia news agency said. No injuries were reported. There were no immediate claims of responsibility for the attack which occurred in the outskirts of Ankara. On Jan. 20 another office of the party also in Ankara was bombed. One person was injured in that attack. The Democracy Party, which has 17 members in the 450-member parliament, allegedly has links to the outlawed Ulster Defence Association. The PDK is waging a separatist guerrilla war in southeastern Turkey. Many of the Democracy Party deputies are facing prosecution on charges of separatism.

IRA plants more bombs

LONDON (Agencies) — A firebomb detonated in a London shop and started a fire while police defused another suspected explosion device, police said Sunday.

The incendiary, hidden among towels in a bedding shop, did not hurt any of the officers when it exploded Saturday night, Scotland Yard said in a statement.

Although there was no immediate claim of responsibility, the Irish Republican Army (IRA) frequently uses cassette-sized firebombs to cause economic damage and inconvenience in Britain, particularly London. The outlawed group has been waging a 22-year violent campaign against British rule in Ireland.

In one of the worst attacks Thursday, firebombs caused hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of damage to three stores. Police found another device in an infant's accessories store Friday and defused it.

The IRA considers the easily concealed, homemade devices an effective way to maintain political pressure on Britain without risking civilian fatalities.

Last month of British and Irish governments offered to negotiate with Sinn Fein, the IRA's legal political ally, if the IRA first renounced violence.

Sinn Fein and IRA leaders are holding internal discussions on the offer.

Authorities in Dublin, the Irish capital, earlier Saturday ordered shopkeepers to be on alert for suspected firebombs after two suspect devices were discovered in stores off O'Connell Street, the city's major thoroughfare.

So-called "loyalist" paramilitaries based in northern Ireland's pro-British Protestant community have begun developing IRA-style firebombs to attack Irish targets. The outlawed Ulster Defence Association claimed responsibility last week for firebombs that badly damaged two shops in the border town of Dundalk, about 100 kilometres.

U.N. plans broad range of Iraq monitoring measures

MANAMA (AP) — U.N. experts are deploying a broad range of measures to ensure Baghdad does not acquire or build long-range missiles of the type it fired at Saudi Arabia and Israel during the Gulf war, a Russian official said Sunday.

"It's a rather big machinery that we're setting up and it's unprecedented... to establish an international U.N. machinery under Security Council auspices and mechanisms," said Nikita Smidovich, talking to reporters on his return from Iraq.

Mr. Smidovich, who headed a team of 16 experts, discussed with the Iraqis where television cameras and other monitoring sensors would be placed and how often factories would be inspected.

They returned to their regional base in Bahrain Saturday after a week-long visit to Iraq to develop the monitoring plan that is designed to prevent Iraq using its factories to develop missiles beyond the range of 150 kilometres.

Uzbekistan accused of role in Afghan fighting

KABUL (Agencies) — Afghanistan's northern neighbour, the former Soviet Republic of Uzbekistan, is accused of aiding a rebel faction fighting to overthrow President Burhanuddin Rabbani, according to an official spokesman in Kabul Sunday.

"We have clear-cut evidence about direct interference by Uzbekistan in the Kabul fighting," presidential spokesman Abdul Aziz Morad told AFP.

Mr. Morad said the former communist militia warlord, Uzbek General Abdul Rashid Dostum, who launched a failed coup attempt in the capital on New Year's Day, had received much military support for the one-month long Kabul factional fighting.

He said representatives of Gen. Dostum met with government officials in the Uzbek capital, Tashkent in order to help plan the coup attempt in Kabul.

"Many facilities, both military and economic, have been put at Dostum's disposal by

Uzbekistan," Mr. Morad said. He accused Uzbekistan of not only supplying Gen. Dostum with jets, aircraft spare parts and the construction of a military airstrip, but also of launching air-raids over Kabul and other targets from inside Uzbekistan itself.

Although Mr. Morad said it was not clear if the Uzbek interference in Afghanistan originated from the highest official level, he nevertheless demanded that a joint Afghan-Uzbek commission be appointed to investigate the charges.

The rumble of anti-aircraft fire over the capital followed three raids on Kabul by Soviet jets before midday Sunday, with bombs exploding at the foot of the strategic "Television Mountain," which houses a lot of heavy artillery.

But Mr. Rabbani's forces said their aircraft retaliated and shot down two of Gen. Dostum's Soviet-built SU-22 fighters Sunday morning outside the beleaguered capital.

COLUMN 8

Woman acquitted in slaying of violent husband

TURIN, Italy (AP) — A woman who stabbed her husband to death in front of their three children is free after a prosecutor dropped the case, saying it was fitting for the man's violent life to end "at the point of a knife." The case of Regina Micheletta Giot and her apparent suffering at the hands of her drug-addicted husband drew comparisons with Lorena Bobbitt, the American woman acquitted Jan. 21 despite cutting off her husband's penis. Mrs. Giot's husband, Cesario Camon, was described in court as a malicious drug addict who often beat his wife during their 13-year marriage and sometimes turned on their children. During a violent outburst by Mr. Camon on Jan. 16, Mrs. Giot stabbed him in the stomach, according to police. Mr. Camon died on the way to the hospital on the outskirts of this northern Italian city. Mrs. Giot was freed late Friday, but said she would not return to the home she shared with Mr. Camon. She spent Saturday with relatives. "I do not wish to the Turks any harm, but if they interfere in the Caucasus then the Armenians will arm the Kurds and there are 30 million of them. Turkey will disintegrate," he said.

"Every day the Turks are bombing Kurdish villagers and you in the West don't say this is fascism, you say it's democracy. When I ask people to stop bombing Russians you in the West call me a fascist."

Mr. Zhirinovsky proposed that Muslim peoples in former Soviet republics and further south should return to strict Islamic law rather than trying to maintain their own independent states.

"Every Muslim is supposed to complete the Haj pilgrimage to Mecca on foot from wherever he lives. Do they do that?"

No, they fly on aeroplanes made by Russian engineers," he said.

SANTA ANA, California (AFP) — A Jury found the state of California liable for issuing a driver's license to a legally blind man and ordered the state to pay \$4.1 million to three people he ran down in a crosswalk. The Superior Court jury reached a verdict Friday, in a lawsuit against the Department of Motor Vehicles for the accident caused by George Lizarralde, who is legally blind. The jury already had found the department negligent for giving Mr. Lizarralde a driver's license. The 31-year-old man unsuccessfully applied for a license three times before receiving it in 1985 even though he flunked the vision test. The license was renewed in 1990. Deborah Mohr, 32, one of the victims in the August 1991 accident, suffered brain damage and walks with a cane. She was awarded \$3.5 million. "I would give up every penny to be able to walk normally again, to have my memory back again, and to have things back to normal," she said. The department said it would appeal the award.

Such Scud-type missiles along with nuclear, chemical and biological weapons were prohibited under the Gulf war ceasefire.

A team of chemical weapons experts led by German Horst Reeps is heading to Baghdad on Tuesday to work on developing a monitoring plan to guarantee Iraq does not try to revive chemical and biological weapons programmes.

Nuclear inspectors of the Vienna-based International Atomic Energy Agency have been doing the same in the field of prohibited nuclear weapons.

"But in missiles, you don't even have a legal precedent, unlike the chemical area where you have a chemical weapons convention and the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty," said Mr. Smidovich.

In the case of Iraq, there was a need to watch "the whole industrial base" to stop the manufacture of parts for long-range missiles, he said.

LONDON (R) — Prince Charles has ended his affair with an army officer's wife in order to regain the public esteem lost through the breakup of his marriage to Princess Diana, British newspapers reported Sunday. The heir to the throne's relationship with Camilla Parker-Bowles was commonly cited as a major cause of the royal marriage split. "It's over with Camilla," proclaimed the tabloid News Of The World. "The prince and his married confidante have made a pact not to see or even speak to each other." It quoted a "friend" of the prince as saying Mrs. Bowles was eager to preserve Prince Charles' chances to succeed his mother, Queen Elizabeth. "Both the prince and Camilla know how important this year is to him," it said. A poll released earlier this month showed that Prince Charles's popularity had sunk to all-time lows, with most Britons preferring Princess Diana. Prince Charles won an approval rating of only 17 per cent while Princess Diana had 47 per cent — an indication that she had kept the sympathy of the public since the couple's bitter separation 13 months ago. Ten years ago, Prince Charles was the most popular member of the royal family, with a 50 per cent confidence vote. But then came